Henry IV., König z. Frankr.

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A Letter

Written by the King of *Nauarre vnto the French King* concerning his innocencie, against *the ſclaunders of his aduerſaries.*

Truely tranſlated out of *French*. Anno 1585.

1585.

A Letter

Written by the King of

Navarre unto the French King

concerning his Innocencie, against

the Slanders of his mother.

Truely translated out

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A Letter written by the King of NAVARRE vnto the French King, concerning his innocencie, against the slaunders of his aduersaries. Truely translated out of *French*.

1585.

MY Lord, so soone as the auctors of these newe troubles had made some shewe of the purposed effects of their bad mindes toward your Highnesse, it pleased your Maiestie in writing to impart vnto mee that opinion which iustly your selfe had conceiued of their entents, which was, that notwithstãding whatsoeuer their pretences, your selfe were not ignoraunt how they practised against your person and Crowne, also that they sought to grow mightie by your decay and detriment, as men that purposed the totall ruine and vtter subuertion of your estate.

These my Lord, were the very effect of the wordes of your Letters wherewith your Maiestie vouchsafed to honor me, as acknowledging the vnio of my hap with yours, expressely adding, that they endeuoured my ouerthrowe together with yours. Myne, I say, my Lorde, the which, depending vpon you as it doth, thei can hardly cõpasse without yours. In respect hereof it pleased your Maiestie also to commaunde your Gouernors, generall Liutenants, Baylifes, Stewardes, and all other your Officers to withstande them as Rebelles and perturbers of the Common quiet. Your Maiesties declarations also were herevpon sent vnto all your Courts of Parliamẽt, and in the same ratefied, whereby they were pronounced Traytors, whereof haue ensued sundrie solemne decrees, and vpon the sayd decrees diuers executions of great importaunce in many partes of this Realme, which remaine as presidents as well of their rebellion and conspiracie against your estate, as also of that iudgement which

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your Maieſtie, your Counſaile, & your Courtes of Parliament had aſſeſſed of their purpoſes.

All this notwithſtanding, it pleaſed your Maieſtie according to your naturall clemencie, to thinke good by gentle meanes to reduce them to their dueties, and therevpon vouchſafing to honor me with your Letters, you therein commaunded me with pacience to ſuffer all, whereby your ſelfe might haue the better leyſure to enter into conſideration of them and their purpoſes, to the ende to giue to your Subiects to vnderſtande how farre the very cauſes of their deuiſes did differ from their publiſhed pretences: alleadging that although your ſelfe were not ignoraunt thereof, yet that it was requiſite to open the ſame to your people, whom vnder the fayned ſhewe of Religion, they ſought to withdraw fró their dueties. Your Maieſtie my Lord, are to call to mind with what pacience at your commaundement I haue hetherto borne and obeyed: notwith-

ſtanding, according to your wiſedome and equitie you are not ignoraunt by how iuſt occaſions I haue alwaies bene prouoked and my pacience mooued, eſpecially ſeeing my ſelfe chalenged as partie by your Maieſties enemies, who openly haue declared that they ſought only my ouerthrowe, ſo that although I plainly found my ſelf to be the ſcope of their attempts and enterpriſes, yet in reſpect of that reuerence which euermore I haue endeuoured to ſhewe to your commaundements I durſt not once ſtirre againſt them, no notwithſtãding I dayly beheld them marching before my face, yea almoſt within my reach, in Armes againſt your Maieſtie, in ſtomacke againſt my ſelfe, euermore attẽpting againſt either ſome Townes within my gouernment, either ſome of my houſes, or els againſt my owne perſon, and yet occaſion ſo fitly ſeruing I might neither doe your Maieſtie any ſeruice requiſite, or my ſelfe bee reuenged according as reaſon & nature did require. Your onely will my Lord, haue

I accepted for reason, and your commaundement for lawe: My nature and duetie haue I strained and forced, yea almost my reputation and credite vnder your precepts, and that the rather my Lord in respect that your Maiestie still honoring mee with your Letters, did in the same promise to be as mindfull of my interest as of your owne: as also that you would not graunt or codiscend vnto any thing that might bee preiudiciall to your Edict of peace, which you purposed to be irreuocable, yea and that in and according to the same you would protect and defend all your Subiects indifferently: all which promises your Maiesty haue from time to time reiterated in all your Letters, which beeing of your owne handwriting I do reserue, as also you haue promised the same to the Lords of *Clervant* and *Chassincourt*, with other my agents resiant about your person, as also haue the Queene your Mother as well by word of mouth as by Letters.

When therefore my Lord I heard it reported

reported that your Maiestie had on the ſuddeine concluded peace with thoſe that haue rebelled againſt your ſeruice, vpon cõdition: that your edict be broken: your loyall ſubiectes baniſhed: the conſpirators armed: yea armed with your forces and authoritie againſt your moſt obedient and faithfull ſubiectes: euen againſt my ſelfe, who haue that honour to bee of your Maieſties blood, and allyed vnto you, who euer ſince I ſuppoſed my ſelfe to haue any place in your good fauour and liking, could neuer bee found to haue departed therefro, except by too much pacience, ſufferance, and duetifull obedience: whẽ this I ſay came to my knowledge, I leaue it to your Maieſties conſideration to thinke in what perplexitie I might remayne, either wherein I might repoſe any further hope, except in diſpayre.

In that declaration which on my behalfe was exhibited vnto your Maieſty, I haue motioned the moſt equall and reaſonable conditions that might bee

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deuiſed for the furtherance of common & generall quiet, for your ſecuritie, & for the reliefe of al your ſubiects. *Viz.* If their quarell bee for Religion, (howbeit, notwithſtanding whatſoeuer Buckler they make of the ſame, yet it is the farthelt from their thoughts) I haue referred my ſelfe to a free Counſayle: If for aſſurances (which certeinly they haue no reaſon to demaund) I haue offered to reſigne my gouernement, together with what ſoeuer my Fortreſſes or houldes, vpon condition that them ſelues will doe the like, and that to the end no way to prolong the ſtaye of quietneſſe throughout this Realme: If it bee my ſelfe that they ſhoote at, either if vnder pretence and colour of mee they pretend to trouble the whole land, to the ende your Maieſtie may no longer be troubled thereabout, I haue craued that this quarell might be decided betweene them and mee, yea (for the cutting off of common calamities) euen betweene their perſons and myne. To be briefe, I haue

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beyond all shew of reason, and contrary to all naturall sence, yeelding to whatsoeuer your Maiesties commaundemets proceeded farther then duetie could binde, and, notwithstanding the inequalitie of our degrees and callings, haue stooped and become equall with my inferiors, to the end with my blood to redeeme so many mischifes. Yea I haue abased my selfe to those persons whome your Maiestie haue pronounced Rebelles.

If therefore my mishappe bee such (which I wil not yet beleeue) that your Maiestie haue proceeded so farre, as notwithstanding all these my conclusions and submissions, to cōclude such a treatie, and thereby to infringe your Edictes, and to arme your Rebelles against your estate, against your blood, yea and against your person, I can not but hartely lament and bewaile your Maiesties condition, especially seeing your highnesse through contempt of my faithful seruice, forced to vtter subuersion of your estate, togither with

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the conſideration of the calamities of your realme, the end whereof we are in vaine to looke or hope for, except in the totall ruyne of the ſame: For that all the world doth knowe by twentie yeres proofe and more, that their pretence is a vaine attempt, and their building a manifeſt ſubuerſion.

In the meane tyme I will comfort my ſelfe in my innocencie, integritie and affectiō to your Maieſtie and your eſtate: alſo in that it hath not beene long of me, that with my owne perill I haue not preuented this ſhipwarcke: but aboue all, I will ground my conſolation vpon the Lord God, the protector of my ſinceritie and loyaltie, who in this neceſsitie will not forſake mee, but rather will encreaſe my courage & multiply my meanes againſt all my ennemies, who are yours.

And my Lord, I beſeech hym to enſpire you with good counſayle, and in all your affayres to aſsiſt you with his ſtrength. Alſo that he wil vouchſafe me his grace during lyfe, to yeeld vnto you my